

# What Can I do if I'm Being Harassed?

- ◆ Trust your own judgment.
- ◆ Do not blame yourself – it's not your fault.
- ◆ Keep a journal of each time something happens, including dates, times, locations, witnesses and if you were able to stop it. Include how the situation made you feel.
- ◆ Confide in a friend, family member or teacher about it and how it makes you feel.
- ◆ Tell the harasser to stop, either in person or in writing. Inform him/her which specific behaviors are inappropriate and unwelcome. If you feel too uncomfortable to confront the harasser yourself, seek the assistance of a trusted individual (friend, parent, teacher, principle, etc.) Regardless of how you choose to do it, the harasser must be told to stop and why.
- ◆ Does your school have a sexual harassment policy? If your school has a sexual harassment policy, be sure to follow it. If not, talk to school officials or a trusted adult about the harassment. If your school takes the appropriate actions, the situation is in the hands of your administrators. Be sure to cooperate with them to get the problem solved. However, if your school doesn't take the appropriate actions, then you or someone acting for you may file a complaint with the Office of Civil Rights.
- ◆ Report the offensive behavior to a teacher, counselor or school administrator.
- ◆ If your school does not correct the problem, ask a trusted adult to contact:  
Office of Civil Rights  
US Department of Education  
600 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202-1100

- ◆ For additional information and a complaint form, ask a trusted adult to contact the New York office for Civil Rights at:  
75 Park Place  
New York, NJ 10007  
(212) 637-6466  
weekdays from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.
- ◆ You also can call the New Jersey Coalition Against Sexual Assault at 800-601-7200. A recorded message will list the local hotline in your county. When you call the local hotline, you may need to leave a name and a phone number for a counselor to return your call.

## What Can I do if I Witness Someone Else Being Harassed?

- ◆ Say that you don't think it's funny.
- ◆ Tell the harasser to stop.
- ◆ Encourage the person being harassed to seek the help of a teacher, counselor, school administrator or hotline.

## Are You a Sexual Harasser?

Take this test: Would you say or do the same thing in front of your parent, teacher or other respected adult? No? Then don't say it or do it at all! This behavior may very well be considered sexual harassment.

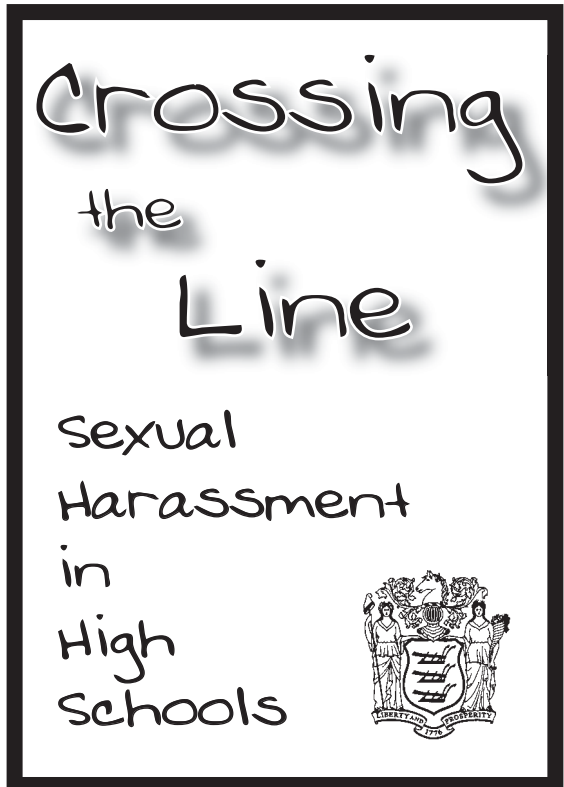
## For Help Call Your Local Rape Crisis Center:

Atlantic	800-286-4184
Bergen	201-487-2227
Burlington	609-267-8500
	856-234-8888
Camden	866-295-7378
Cape May	609-522-6489
Cumberland	856-455-5555
Essex	877-733-CARE
Gloucester	866-295-7378
Hudson	201-795-5757
Hunterdon	888-988-4033
Mercer	609-394-9000
Middlesex	877-665-7273
Monmouth	732-264-7273
	888-264-7273
Morris	973-829-0587
Ocean	732-370-4010
	609-494-1090
Passaic	973-881-1450
Salem	856-935-6655
Somerset	908-526-7444
Sussex	973-875-1211
Union	908-233-7273
Warren	866-623-7233
	908-453-4181
	908-475-8408

*Acknowledgement: The Division on Women thanks student intern Minna Urrey for her work on the development of this brochure.*

Copies of this brochure may be obtained by contacting:  
NJ Department of Community Affairs  
Division on Women  
101 South Broad Street - PO Box 801  
Trenton, NJ 08625-0801  
(609) 292-8840  
TTY: (609) 777-0799  
[www.nj.gov/dca/dow](http://www.nj.gov/dca/dow)

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State of New Jersey  
Richard J. Codey  
Acting Governor



Department of Community Affairs  
Susan Bass Levin  
Commissioner


## Comments from Acting Governor Codey and Commissioner Levin

Sexual harassment can happen to anyone of any age. That is why it is important you know what sexual harassment is and what to do if it happens to you or someone you know.

This brochure provides you with important information about sexual harassment. It defines what sexual harassment is and gives clear examples of things that can be considered sexual harassment. Most importantly, it explains what to do if you or someone you know becomes a victim of sexual harassment.

If you are being sexually harassed, it is important for you to ask for help from a trusted adult like a parent, teacher, school nurse or counselor. Every county in our state has a Rape Care Center that can provide you with free and confidential help if you are being sexually harassed. If you think someone has crossed the line, don't be afraid or embarrassed to ask for help.

With regards,

  
Richard J. Codey  
Acting Governor

  
Susan Bass Levin  
Commissioner

## Important Numbers

New Jersey Coalition  
Against Sexual Assault  
800-601-7200

Division on Civil Rights  
609-292-4605

National Victim Center  
800-FYI-CALL

Division on Women  
609-292-8840

National Organization for  
Women  
609-393-0156

## Definitions

sexual harassment is:

- ◆ Any unwelcome behavior, gesture, look, comment or touching of a sexual nature. It is usually done on purpose to make someone feel uncomfortable, intimidated or threatened. It may even result in physical injury. The harasser can be another student, a team member, a leader or a teacher.
- ◆ Determined by the perception of the victim on a case-by-case basis. If you think you were sexually harassed, trust your instincts, even if others don't agree.
- ◆ A widespread problem facing people of all ages, regardless of their race or gender.
- ◆ Illegal.

sexual harassment can  
take the form of:

- ◆ Sexual comments, jokes, gestures or looks
- ◆ Touching, grabbing and pinching
- ◆ Intentionally brushing up against you
- ◆ Flashing or mooning
- ◆ Spreading sexual rumors
- ◆ Showing, giving or intentionally leaving sexual pictures, photographs, illustrations, messages, and notes
- ◆ Blocking your path in a sexual way
- ◆ Writing sexual messages or graffiti
- ◆ Forcing you to kiss or do something sexual to someone
- ◆ Pulling off, down or at your clothing
- ◆ Spying on you while dressing or changing

## Effects

If you are being sexually  
harassed, you may feel:

- ◆ Uncomfortable
- ◆ Sad/Depressed
- ◆ Self-conscious
- ◆ Confused
- ◆ Embarrassed
- ◆ Less confident
- ◆ Scared
- ◆ Guilty
- ◆ Alone

If you are being sexually  
harassed, you may  
experience:

- ◆ Difficulty paying attention in class
- ◆ Difficulty studying
- ◆ Lower grades
- ◆ Difficulty sleeping
- ◆ Self-doubt
- ◆ Withdrawal from friends and activities
- ◆ Eating disorders
- ◆ A weakened immune system

## Did you know?

- ◆ Four out of five students have experienced sexual harassment in school\*
- ◆ Sexual harassment occurs everywhere
- ◆ One in two students has been sexually harassed by a peer\*
- ◆ People don't harass others out of affection; they do it to gain power and control over their victims
- ◆ In New Jersey, any person over the age of 18 is subject to arrest and prosecution for sexual harassment and may be subject to harsh civil and criminal penalties
- ◆ If left ignored, there is a 75 percent chance the harassment will continue to worsen\*\*

\* Source: AAUW report, Hostile Hallways, 1993

\*\* Source: Farley, Lin Sexual Shakedown, 1980

## Steps

Sexual harassment differs from case to case. Many times it happens in different steps from sexist remarks to sexual assault. However, the steps may not always apply or happen in the same sequence.

- Step 1:** Sexist remarks – convey degrading sexist attitudes
- Step 2:** Seductive behavior – sexual advances
- Step 3:** Sexual bribery – promise of reward in return for a sexual favor
- Step 4:** Sexual coercion – use of threats to force a sexual favor
- Step 5:** Sexual assault – touching, physical assault, rape